

STATE SENATOR • LIZ BRATER

Brater Press Release



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BRATER DEMANDS ACTION ON BILLS TO STOP OUT-OF-STATE TRASH MDEQ report says flow of foreign waste still on the rise

LANSING-Noting this week's announcement by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) that Michigan solid waste imports made up 29% of all solid waste disposed in Michigan in 2005, Sen. Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor) called for action on Democrat-sponsored legislation that would instantly decrease the amount of trash brought into Michigan.

"This is a problem that needs to be addressed at the state level," said Brater. "The bills we have introduced would go a long way toward giving Michigan the tools it needs to manage the inflow of trash. Other proposals simply push the responsibility to the federal level. We can and should do something about this here."

In 2005, a new law was passed to ban solid waste imports from Michigan. However, action at the federal level is required before that law can go into effect. Democrats in the House and Senate have been pushing for action on their bills which would decrease the inflow of trash through the process of supply and demand, address the causes of importation, and encourage recycling. Sen. Brater has introduced SB 256, which would add a \$6 per ton surcharge to all waste dumped in Michigan; the resources resulting from the surcharge would be giving back to local municipalities to create and maintain recycling programs. The late Sen. Herb Kehrl introduced HB 4760, a bill that would place a moratorium on new landfill production and prevent expansion of already existing facilities.

This week, DEQ announced that in 2005, Michigan landfills disposed of almost 64 million cubic yards of solid waste with almost 12 million cubic yards being waste from outside the state of Michigan. This is up 2% from the previous year. Waste from Canada continues to be the largest source of garbage imports making up approximately 19% of total solid waste disposed in Michigan.

"We import too much solid waste in this state, especially from Canada," said Brater.
"Right now the cost of trashing Michigan is cheap for those in other states and countries, but the cost to Michigan's economy and environment is more than we can afford."

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State Senator Brater represents Senate District 18 which includes the cities of Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Chelsea, the Villages of Barton Hills and Dexter, and the following townships: Ann Arbor, Augusta, Dexter, Freedom, Lima, Lyndon, Northfield, Salem, Scio, Sharon, Superior, Sylvan, Webster and Ypsilanti. She is the minority vice chair of the natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee and the Agriculture, Forestry, and Tourism Committee.